

WHY DEMOCRACY IS LOSING IN GERMANY

Behind the Recent Elections

A. R. L. GURLAND

THE German federal elections of August 14 marked the difficult birth, thirty years after the promulgation of the Weimar Constitution, of a new German republic in the greater part of a dismembered Germany. Unhappily, few believe in its possibilities for success, and fewer still that the long sought-for German democracy will be ushered in under its auspices.

When the Allied forces broke into Germany, many months of preparation, thought, and research had already been devoted by political analysts and observers to the problem of "democratizing" and "denazifying" Germany. Various bits of policy already existed, and more were fashioned in the years

TODAY, four years after the end of World War II, one can get general agreement that the denazification policy of the Western powers, conceived as the first step toward democratizing Germany, has proved a dismal failure. Were the objectives of the original policy utopian, were the wrong men put in charge of the undertaking, were the methods used unsound? A.R.L. GURLAND here addresses himself to these questions, and offers a striking analysis of the social, political, and economic factors that must be taken into account in any effort to reconstruct Germany along democratic lines. Dr. Gurland, who was born in Moscow, studied at the universities of Berlin and Leipzig, and was an active worker in the field of labor journalism and education in pre-Hitler Germany. In 1947 he took part in a study of bureaucratization in postwar Germany; and recently he completed a comprehensive study of postwar population trends and labor union developments in Western Germany for the ECA. Dr. Gurland participated in studies of anti-Semitism conducted by the Institute of Social Research, and is the author of "Technological Trends and Economic Structure under National Socialism" (in *Studies in Science and Philosophy*, 1941), and co-author of *The Fate of Small Business in Nazi Germany* (Washington, 1943).

of occupation. The immediate division of Germany between East and West, and the eventual subjugation of the East to the Russian conception of "democracy," raised enormous problems. Yet it still seemed possible for a democratic society to arise in the West alone. Everything, or so it appeared, had been destroyed. A new commonwealth could be built from the ground up.

Today, such hopes are all but forgotten. The new-born Western German state is today merely accepted on sufferance by the forty-six or forty-seven million people crowded within its borders. No one is enthusiastic about it, no one in Germany really wants it. The political scene is characterized by apathetic indifference; by emotional opposition, in all quarters, to the Military Government rule of the Allied powers; and by the political and economic predominance of authentic reactionary elements. To be specific: today the administration of Germany is more firmly than ever in the hands of a conservative and unimaginative bureaucracy; the political power of the churches is greater than under the Empire, the Republic, or the Nazi dictatorship; the economy is in the hands of more or less the same people who ran it for Hitler. The conservative Christian Democratic party, and groups further to the Right, triumphed in the recent elections, with the support of the churches and to the open satisfaction of American authorities. How explain this sorry outcome of four years of attempted democratization?

Parliaments and Bureaucracies

CONCEIVABLY things would not have been different if the occupying powers had left the re-establishment of democracy in Germany to German democratic groups, German legislation, and German administra-

tion. But in retrospect, one can see that the Allied military administrators to whom this task was entrusted neglected important lessons of Germany's political history and ignored whatever elements were left of the pre-Nazi German democratic tradition.

The basic mistake was in failing to realize that the German democratic tradition is essentially a parliamentary one; that all democratic progress in Germany had been linked to extending parliamentary prerogatives and privileges at the expense of the executive branch; and that limitation of democratic government in Germany always began with the encroachment of appointed bureaucracies upon the powers of elected parliaments. Conversely, it was the widening of the powers of allegedly "non-partisan" and "non-political" civil servants, military men, and other uncontrollable bureaucrats that tended to culminate in the absolute rule of a bureaucratic machine, possibly revamped or remodeled to suit the political group in power, but at all times resting on the inherited and immovable base of a rigid civil service system. The instability of the Weimar Republic and its weakness in fending off the Nazi assault was in large measure the outcome of the "non-partisan" tradition of the civil service, which successfully resisted parliamentary control and deprived democratic political parties, when they were in power, of a reliable administrative machinery.

But the Western military governments, apparently taken in by the Nazi legend, preferred to believe rather that the collapse of the Weimar Republic had been hastened by a multitude of political parties, by the weakness of the republican government's executive, by the encroachment of politics on the civil service—i.e., by too much representative government. They decided that a democratic Germany needed a strong executive based on a presumed independent, "non-political" civil service. Instead of attacking the legal foundations of the permanent bureaucratic caste, they immediately re-established an administrative machinery operated by permanent civil servants, in order to "take civil service out of politics" and to institute a "separation

of powers" which, while theoretically designed to prevent the delegation of legislative and judicial power to agents of the executive branch, actually placed the civil service bureaucracy out of reach of legislative and judicial controls.

German *Land* (provincial) governments, first appointed by occupation authorities and later elected by popular vote, were prevailed upon to enact civil service codes with much more rigid guarantees of special privileges for officials than had been enjoyed under Imperial, Weimar, or Nazi civil service regulations. Instead of insisting on the inviolable sovereignty of parliamentary bodies, the only possible basis of German democracy, the military administrators hallowed the social status and enhanced the political prestige of career bureaucrats, making their position impregnable.

IN THE American Zone, German legislation protecting reinstatement and pension claims of civil servants was maintained in force for those not classed as active Nazis; since the American authorities, as a rule, did not interfere with the implementation of German laws by German agencies, this made the protection of the rights of all "cleared" officials mandatory. In the British Zone, where Military Government controls extended to all echelons of the German administration, removal of reactionary officials by German governments was prevented by British administrators, who contended that the occupiers alone should weed out Nazi elements, and that those whom they had not removed were protected by their civil service status.

The British authorities similarly destroyed the sound democratic tradition of German municipal government by transforming key elective offices into civil service career jobs. And all through the British Zone, civil servants were prohibited from active participation in political life (taking part in election campaigns, and so on); this not only prevented the civil service from being exposed to the political climate of a functioning democracy, but also directly undermined the

strength of democratic groups.* At a later date, American Military Government followed suit by persuading the constitution-makers in Bonn to make officials of the Bizonal Administration ineligible for Western Germany's federal parliament. Concerned with introducing the separation of powers, the American and British administrators failed to realize that on the Continent democracy has always been based on the supremacy of parliament, and that the holding of both elective and appointive offices is intrinsic to this tradition.

Neither of the Western military governments favored unionization of civil servants, which would have helped break the political isolation of the bureaucratic caste, since in the single industrial-type union which until recently represented public service workers, civil servants rubbed shoulders with non-civil-service, free-contract salary earners, and manual workers. As late as the beginning of this year, Western occupation authorities issued a civil service code for the Bizonal Economic Administration (the kernel of the future Trizonal government) which made civil service status mandatory for all non-manual workers employed by bizonal agencies, and at the same time abolished collective bargaining for civil servants. A good Weimar tradition, which had found recognition in the British and American zones† after the re-constitution of labor unions in 1945, was thus abandoned.

The Fate of Self-Government

As a counterweight to the bureaucratic government machinery handed down from generation to generation since the days of the first post-feudal administrative structures, German liberal and labor movements at an early stage had developed an extensive network of self-governing institutions. These had prospered under the Weimar Republic, and were still functioning well in those years of depression and mass unemployment when the top structure of the central government was already beginning to crumble under the Nazi offensive. On the one hand, there existed an extensive and highly perfected sys-

tem of municipal institutions which played an important part in economic activity, public welfare, and public education, and performed a number of governmental functions. These institutions were operated by democratic city governments, in which the Nazi party could not gain strong footholds up to the very last days of the Weimar Republic. Similarly, a large part of the social and economic activities of the Weimar "welfare state" were conducted by autonomous bodies endowed with limited public authority. These agencies were administered by the elected representatives of employers, employees, and consumers, and by representatives of the municipalities and the regional administrative bodies. They ran labor offices (employment agencies with extended functions), adjudicated labor disputes, and administered the social insurance system as well as some public-owned corporations.

To re-establish the democratic process, it should have seemed imperative to transfer as many executive powers as possible to local organs of self-government and to the democratically constituted agencies for social welfare and economic controls destroyed by the Nazis. A program of such scope, however, was not within the perspective of either the American or British military administrators,

*The Social Democrats were particularly hard hit. In contrast to the British Labor party, the Social Democratic party has very few followers among the educated middle classes. Whatever intellectuals the Social Democrats had were badly needed for government work in 1945 and were placed in civil service positions. It also has to be borne in mind that civil-service status in Germany extends to a number of professional and semi-professional occupations not necessarily treated as civil servants in other countries: all teachers at all levels of the educational system; technical, medical, research personnel in all national, state, and municipal services; many categories of employees in public-owned enterprise, etc. Traditionally, most Social Democratic followers among intellectuals had been in these categories. The exclusion of civil servants from political activity under British Military Government directives thus deprived the Social Democrats of the services of an intellectual elite at a time when right-of-center parties had at their disposal all the intellectual talent they needed.

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who were recruited—with but few exceptions—from career officers, small-town businessmen, commercial lawyers, British colonial officials, and junior faculty members of the smaller American colleges. Acting under strategic directives that aimed chiefly at the elimination of Nazi chieftains, and answerable to public opinion at home, which was also focused almost exclusively on the denazification issue, the military administrators were left to their own trial-and-error methods in carrying out the broader aspects of policy for strengthening German democracy.

In the minds of many American administrators, Germany was to be granted the blessings of separation of powers, of checks and balances, and a strong executive, “with no nonsense.” “No nonsense” meant no participation by semi-public or private organizations in the exercise of governmental powers. To British generals and India Service officials, the Germans were “natives” to be ruled strictly but correctly, to be given a native civil service under orders from London, to be allowed (for educational purposes mainly) consultative pseudo-parliaments without effective powers over the executive, and to be taught to separate politics from economics.

So the self-administered organs of social insurance and the autonomous central office for unemployment insurance and labor-market control were not re-introduced. While labor courts were re-established, the creation of supervisory labor-management bodies for the coordination of court and mediation practices was not permitted. Important public utilities and large sectors of public enterprise were removed—for “decartelization” purposes!—from the control of municipal corporations, and placed under the trusteeship of appointed officials not subject to democratic controls.*

Democratically elected works councils, be-

*As late as November 10, 1948, Military Government Law No. 75, which provided for the turning over of Ruhr coal and steel properties to German management, retained public-owned utility concerns under the management of appointive officials not answerable to any organs of democratic government.

latedly permitted in April 1946 under Allied Control Council Order No. 22, were prevented from exercising any control over industrial management, and from extending beyond the confines of a single plant. This prohibition prevented the formation of overall works councils for huge combines with many plants, which might have been helpful in limiting the “excessive concentration of economic power” prohibited on paper under American Military Government Law No. 56 and British Military Government Ordinance No. 78.

The *Land* Versus the Nation

THE monetary chaos and economic disintegration caused by the original Allied de-industrialization policy and aggravated, after this policy had been abandoned by Britain and the United States, by the impossibility of achieving quadripartite agreement on currency and production, reduced municipal self-government to bankruptcy and impotence. And the little social and political prestige municipal self-government still retained was shattered by the excessive power the Western military governments vested in a synthetically inflated *Land* bureaucracy, chosen as the main governmental pillar of a “decentralized,” “federal” state structure. Instead of a simplified central administration, with substantial executive powers delegated to local elected officials, the occupying powers set up a system of autonomous states, based on previously existing or newly created states, and furnished them with clumsy machinery and inflated staffs. Deprived by Military Government of the power and authority to coordinate policies on a nationwide level, to plan and carry through vital economic programs, or to assure the essentials of living for a disintegrating country’s starving population, they were nevertheless given ample power to usurp the traditional prerogatives of local self-government, to harass and paralyze local administration, to take over the rights and privileges of municipalities, and to strangle local self-government by centralizing taxation.

The military administrators’ efforts to

shape a "federal Germany," composed of a union of recreated and created "states," out of thin air, had even more disastrous results. In Germany, "states rights" has always been the weapon of the most backward, most reactionary groups; the Nazi movement had from the beginning been protected by reactionary *Land* governments from the democratic central government's reprisals. It achieved power in a number of non-Prussian states before it attacked Social Democratic Prussia, for, contrary to general belief, anti-republican and anti-democratic officialdom was less powerful in the national and in the Prussian administration than in many of the *Länder*. When the central government was smashed by Nazism's collapse in 1945, the *Land* administrations remained more or less intact. No removal of "denazifiables" could change the permanent reactionary complexion of these bureaucratic elites. To center the reconstruction of the German government on *Land* administrations was tantamount, under the circumstances, to reinforcing the most anti-democratic girders of the old state edifice.

The "federalization" program was no American Military Government invention; it was the last remnant of quadripartite policy. Wartime propaganda, in particular that influenced by Soviet sources and anti-labor German and Austrian exiles operating with the blessings of the Vatican hierarchy, had revived the 19th-century bogey of "Prussian centralism" as the cause of Nazism. To substitute a loosely knit federation of autonomous states for a "centralized, unitary, Prussia-dominated German Reich" became an Allied war objective. It took the Western Allies years to realize that the dismemberment of Germany's governmental structure was exactly what the Soviets wanted, and that Russian desires coincided here with those of French De Gaullists and French industrial monopolists, particularly in steel and chemicals. "States rights" in Western Germany today benefits semi-Nazi business interests, reactionary political groups, and an anti-democratic ecclesiastical hierarchy. At the same time, "federalization" was a special

favorite of those small-time machine politicians in American uniform whose political thinking was limited by the formula, "What's good enough for the folks back home ought to be good enough for the Krauts."

In this way, one of the less important strata of the bureaucracy was enormously expanded and strengthened. More susceptible to the influence of regional special interest groups than a centralized government machine would have been, the state governments in a number of places became mere appendages of local business interests, obedient tools in the hands of those very same profiteers of Nazism whom the occupation authorities had failed to dislodge from the economy. Since no national central administration existed, eleven corresponding administrations were set up on the *Land* level, often working at cross purposes, and multiplying bureaucratic interference with social and economic processes. In an economy so complex and so interdependent as that of 20th-century Germany, the absence of central executive and legislative powers put insuperable obstacles in the way of economic recovery, prolonging the chaos, misery, and starvation. Anti-Allied, nationalistic, and simple Hitlerite sentiment was bound to increase.

Denazification Reversed

DENAZIFICATION itself, which many Military Government people thought would be a sufficient insurance of democracy, turned out to be enormously more complicated than anyone had imagined. The ineffective procedures used, and the repeated changes necessitated by the inadequacy of the original plans, impaired the prestige of democratic government and those who supported it. The Nazi leaders and major Nazi criminals had vanished without leaving a trace or were handed over to international jurisdiction, a procedure which effectually removed them from the range of interest of the German public.

Actually, denazification was limited to the personnel of public services, without regard to the political importance of the particular

job or branch. Long drawn-out judicial proceedings were instituted upon merely formal charges of having belonged to this or that Nazi organization, and innumerable officials were removed from office pending investigation and trial. If the original plans had been followed, denazification would have affected millions of persons, and it would have taken many years to process their cases.

It was soon clear, however, that it was impossible to try all those originally subject to denazification, while the resumption of any economic and administrative routine was crippled by general uncertainty as to the fate of "denazifiabiles." The number of persons subject to denazification was again and again radically reduced, and the resulting uncertainty dissipated whatever zeal German prosecutors and judges brought to their task. Since court practice under the Military Government's Law of Liberation was guided by the formal considerations of party membership rather than by facts establishing individual guilt, prominent supporters of the Nazis might go scot-free, while small-fry were severely penalized. At a later point, for certain categories of defendants, court trial was dispensed with altogether on payment of a fine (negligible since it was payable in depreciated currency).

Denazification became farcical. But the farce left tens of thousands of people in suspense and uncertainty for years, and made them bitterly resentful of "Allied interference" and "democratic justice." On the other hand, democrats and anti-Nazis, who during the dark years of Nazi rule had dreamed of ultimate justice and retribution, were filled with indignation over what they considered a tremendous travesty of justice.

As the number of those acquitted or classed as mere "followers" grew larger, more and more civil servants who had been suspended or removed from their positions returned, claiming reinstatement with the same rating and pay. On the whole, their claims were valid under the civil service codes re-established and strengthened under Military Government pressure. Furthermore, German de-

partment heads often had no recourse but to reinstate them, for pensioning them off with full retirement pay long before they had reached the age of retirement involved expenditures that no responsible administrator could endorse and which Allied budget officers would not approve. It also saved money to discharge the democratic postwar appointees, since most of the newcomers had been hired under rescindable employment contracts without civil service status, or had not yet acquired appreciable retirement claims.*

The return of former denazifiabiles began on a major scale in 1947 and continued through 1948, i.e., until after the currency reform (June 20, 1948). When the nominally high salaries of top civil servants regained considerable purchasing power, it was the bulk of the denazifiabiles who profited; many postwar appointees who had gone hungry for years found themselves out of jobs just at the time when unemployment went up steeply and new jobs were hard to come by. Many who had offered their services in 1945 to replace the Nazis and get the administration going after the general breakdown were penalized, while those removed from office as major or minor Nazi offenders found themselves rewarded. This did not necessarily reveal pro-Nazi bias on the part of German cabinet ministers or department heads; the paradoxical outcome of denazification was rather an unavoidable consequence of the salvaging of the bureaucratic caste by the Western occupying powers.†

*As early as 1947, the present writer was repeatedly told by indubitably democratic German administrators that they were compelled to keep overt Nazi sympathizers on their staffs because budget appropriations did not permit them to pay for two men—a pre-1945 official and a postwar appointee—for one job.

†In the French Zone, where denazification was taken less seriously, considerably fewer officials were removed or suspended in 1945, and consequently, considerably fewer came back in recent years. In the Soviet Zone civil service prerogatives were completely eliminated, but Soviet administrators and their German puppets smashed the old caste only to replace it with a new one, made up of corrupted, intimidated, and terrorized yes-men. The only place in Germany where genuinely democratic institutions function without being ob-

Economic Profiteers of Nazism

IT WAS, however, not the inadequacy of the denazification of the civil service that hurt most. The bureaucratic machinery had remained more or less the same under both the Weimar Republic and the Nazi Reich; to allow it to remain was consonant with tradition and mass inertia, in spite of the disrepute into which the once proverbially honest and incorruptible officialdom had fallen as a result of Nazi lawlessness and the large-scale corruption of the postwar era of black and gray markets. It was primarily at the Nazi bosses and those who profited from Nazism that the mass resentment generated by the sufferings and hardships imposed by five years of warfare and crushing defeat was directed.

Most Germans, the former organized workers, the politically neutral, and even many who had been Nazi sympathizers in pre-Nazi days, had come to hate the domination of the profiteers of the Nazi regime, the industrial monopolists, the executives of the industrial and banking combines, the plant managers and production bosses, those who grew richer and more indispensable to the political rulers and more powerful the longer the war lasted. To the average citizen, these had been the genuine beneficiaries of Nazi rule. Doubtful democrats were in full agreement with consistent and militant anti-Nazis on this one point: the industrial bosses had to be removed.

But on this very point disillusionment was rapid, irretrievable, and universal. Many of the profiteers, having avoided official connection with the Nazi regime, were not subject to removal under Allied regulations and were left free to go about their business as if nothing had happened. Many others, removed from their positions because of Nazi

connections, still remained employable for "ordinary labor"; and since the Western powers would not stand for management control by works councils (which were completely non-Nazi and Social Democratic in their overwhelming majority, and included a sprinkling of Communists and Christian unionists), Nazi bosses and industry technicians were listed on the payrolls as "ordinary laborers" and kept on in their previous managerial, supervisory, professional jobs. Under inflationary conditions it did not make the slightest difference to the "removed" Nazi profiteer whether he was paid two thousand reichsmarks a month as an executive or fifty marks a week as an ordinary laborer. The "penalized" offender continued to enjoy his palatial house, and the car and chauffeur and expense account supplied by the firm, together with his share of black market supplies and profits. In an economy of all-around scarcity, governmental controls were operated with extreme laxity, "honest business" as operated by the old bosses became part of the black and gray market boom, and ruthless profiteering continued, daily rewarding the same men who had been responsible for Nazism, war, and economic catastrophe.

Effectively—though often unintentionally—protected by occupation authorities, Third Reich profiteers have continued to hold key positions in economic life. The little that the military governments did to "de-concentrate"* economic power—the breaking-up of the steel combines, the seizure of Ruhr coal concerns, the parceling out of the I. G. Farben chemical trust—has not contributed noticeably to the replacement of the top economic executives of the Nazi era with new

*The Allied wartime objective aiming at breaking up the concentration of economic power in Germany was misleadingly termed "decartelization." In actual fact, decartelization, both in the international and domestic field, has been carried out to the limit, and the American Military Government may well claim credit for it. Cartels, that is to say, price-fixing agreements and combinations in restraint of trade, no longer exist in Western Germany. But this has rarely affected concentration of ownership and control in general, for cartels are only one of the means of concentrating economic power. Most huge trusts and combines still operate—under old management.

structed by the dead weight of a caste of appointed and irremovable lifetime officials is Western Berlin. In Berlin, all the special rights and privileges of the old civil service were abrogated in all sectors in an early stage of quadripartite occupation, and the Social Democratic administration of the Western sectors of the city has proved quite capable of keeping the democratic process safe from bureaucratic encroachments.

men. The only noteworthy change is in the relative political importance and public prominence of the representatives of the major industrial interests. Industrial executives too intimately connected with the Nazi elite, such as the managerial personnel of the Flick, Mannesmann, and Thyssen industrial empires, have given way in public functions to those with less tarnished records, particularly Catholic industrialists and bankers who maneuvered cautiously enough to keep their *Fragebogen* unsoiled by Nazi affiliations. As "reliable non-Nazis," men who had profited from the Nazi war economy, from Aryanization, and from imperialist spoliation are prominent in the leadership of the Christian Democratic Union (the ruling party in the Bizonal Area and the French Zone), in governmental agencies of economic control, and in the Military Government-appointed trusteeship of the Ruhr steel and coal industries.*

*A few examples: Dr. Günter Henle, one of the chief executives of the Klöckner steel and machine-building combine and an in-law of the Klöckner family (whose older members represented the Catholic Center party in the pre-Nazi Reichstag), is a CDU member of the Bizonal Economic Council (the provisional parliament for the American and British Zones) and Military Government-appointed member of the Steel Trustee Association, which is charged with the reorganization of the Ruhr steel industry. Another CDU member of the Bizonal Economic Council is Dr. Robert Pferdmenges, owner of the Pferdmenges (formerly Levy) bank in Cologne and banker for another Catholic steel combine, the Otto Wolff firm. High in the councils of the CDU administration for the Bizonal Area is Dr. Otto Schniewind, a private banker who rose to financial prominence under the Nazis, formerly Marshall Plan liaison officer for the Bizonal Economic Administration, now chairman of the board of directors of the Bizonal Reconstruction Loan Corporation, which is in charge of government-supervised and government-financed investments. Dr. Schniewind's deputy on the board of the Reconstruction Loan Corporation is Hermann J. Abs, under the Nazis a member of the management board of the Deutsche Bank, active in the Nazi control of European banking in 1939-1942. Dr. Abs is also a Military Government-appointed member of the German Coal Mining Management (DKBL), which was commissioned by the military governors last July to prepare plans for the reorganization of the Ruhr coal industry. All these men are referred to in CDU circles as representing "pro-French" industrial interests. Their interlocking pre-war and wartime connections with French industrial groups now known to be De Gaullist and

The political power of big business—pro-Nazi, semi-Nazi, or profiting from the Nazis—rests on its close links to the Bizonal and *Land* bureaucracies and the CDU party machine. It is greatly strengthened by its intimate social contacts with high dignitaries of both the Catholic and Lutheran hierarchies, a connection which has helped the German magnates establish friendly relationships with British and American officials, for whom social intercourse with German industrial tycoons was less a matter of policy than of status and of pleasant dealings with educated, well-mannered, English-speaking, church-approved "socialites."

The Role of the Churches

WHILE "coddling" big industrialists was certainly not a part of Allied policy (and had not been envisaged in any known policy directives), the cultivation of contacts with the church hierarchies was. Military administrators, in the early stages of the occupation, treated churchmen as the only reliable Germans. They consulted them on political appointments, permitted them to operate political, educational, welfare, and youth organizations without special licenses, and supplied them with newsprint, publicity facilities, extra food, housing, gasoline, and so on. The church position on cultural and educational issues was accepted and implemented without discussion. This was the case in the French and British Zones, and pronouncedly so in the American Zone. The slow progress of decades towards the separation of church and state, and the elimination of ecclesiastical influence from public education, was smashed in a very few weeks. And this has been done by representatives of a country in which even "released time" for religious instruction outside of public schools is a constitutional issue.

The influence of the churches on cultural and educational activities in present-day Western Germany is stronger than anywhere

anti-American have been fairly well established. The party president of the CDU, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, Mayor of Cologne, always was close to the Cologne Catholic heavy-industry group.

else in Europe except Spain, and this influence is neither democratic nor particularly social-minded. This in a country where the population at large is perhaps more indifferent to churches and church matters than any other in Europe! That the majority of the Catholic clergy and a considerable minority of the Lutheran clergy were consistently—and sometimes vocally—anti-Nazi has not misled anyone into believing them adherents of a politically democratic society.

In politics, both the Catholic and the Lutheran hierarchies are closely connected with the Christian Democratic Union and its Christian Social Union affiliates, and they do not hesitate to use their church, youth, and relief organizations as political machines. Granted great influence on public education after the collapse of Nazi rule, the churches had considerable leeway in determining the spiritual and political content of public school teaching. As a consequence, education for democracy has very little place in the schools, and is confined mainly to adult education.

Today, public opinion in Western Germany is dominated by the interlocking membership of the church hierarchy, the CDU-CSU leadership, the top governmental bureaucracy, and big business, which together exercise control of most media of communication.

Neither socially nor ideologically can this new ruling element be termed National Socialist. Rather, it is nationalist and conservative in a pre-Nazi sense. That is to say, it is non-liberal and non-democratic, indifferent, when not opposed, to the building of a German democracy and to democratic philosophy.

Outlook for Democracy

WE MUST face the fact that the contradictions, vacillations, and reactionary manifestations of Western occupation policy have appallingly discredited democracy in Germany, both as a political system and an intellectual outlook. The denazification muddle dealt a heavy blow to the prestige of the democratic process. Never more than a trav-

esty of justice, it caused grievous harm to many people, gave rise to cruel charges and countercharges, slander and blackmail, and poisoned the moral and political atmosphere for years. Now that it has been abandoned, its noxious effluvia still float around, discouraging any open discussion of the Nazi past, any liberating release of repressed emotions of censure, self-reproach, or guilt.

Under the impact of Soviet terror, following the nightmare of Nazism, many Germans learned to cherish personal freedom and to hate excessive and never-ending governmental interference with individual fate. But the political inconsistency of Western occupation policies and the unforgivable delays in economic reconstruction have produced cynicism about democratic values. The moral authority of the Western democracies, attacked as "hypocritical," "selfish," "cowardly," and "ignorant of all things German," is now at its lowest.

In this climate, democratic renovation and moral rebirth cannot be imported from abroad. It must grow from the inner strength, the creativeness, the ethical and intellectual courage of democratic forces of Western Germany.

The Bonn Basic Law, the new constitution under which the Federal German Republic has been set up, is hardly likely to win new adherents for democracy. Ill-constructed, complicated, unclear, and verbose, it bears the marks of uneasy compromise. The governmental structure it erects is burdened with a bureaucracy too heavy to be genuinely democratic. Under the terms of the Bonn constitution, essential democratic freedoms and civil rights may be abrogated or suspended if their exercise is held to endanger the "basic democratic order," a circumlocution for the bizarre system designed in Bonn. Although American Military Government repeatedly objected to the delegation of legislative power to the executive branch, it has not disapproved "emergency legislation" clauses in the Bonn Constitution, under which, in the absence of a stable majority in the federal parliament, the federal executive, with the approval of representatives of

the *Land* governments,* would be empowered to legislate for a period of six months without dissolving the federal parliament or calling for new elections. The constitutional groundwork has been laid for the continuing evasion of parliamentary controls by joint maneuvers of federal and *Land* bureaucracies, and for the establishment of a solidly cemented bureaucratic rule.

IN THE federal parliament elected on August 14, the conservative coalition which headed the Bizonal Economic Administration will not control a majority. To remain in power, it will have to shift farther to the Right and rely on the support of extreme right-wing groups; and the bureaucrats' position will be reinforced by the instability of the parliamentary majority bloc.

Democratic institutions might still function on a limited scale in the future state, though fenced in by bureaucratic groups, provided economic recovery allays mass frustration and mass resentment. But prosperity is far off. Luxurious shop displays, which impress foreign visitors, cannot disguise widespread misery. Only the upper strata of German society enjoy high standards of living—remarkably high ones, to be sure. The 1948 economic upturn that followed monetary stabilization served only to deepen the contrast in living conditions between a thin layer at the top and the broad masses, since rationing and production and price controls were shortly eliminated by the British and American authorities.

Consequently, the post-stabilization spurt of industrial production has already been exhausted as a result of low purchasing power and the difficulties of developing a large export trade. Recorded unemployment has exceeded 1,200,000, and additional latent unemployment is about four million, in an econ-

*These representatives are to be elected by the *Land* legislatures. But it is a traditional characteristic of German federal government that the representation of *Land* interests on the national level is handled by full-time career officials, i.e., bureaucrats, not parliamentarians. Whether they are appointed by *Land* cabinets (as was the case under the Kaiser and under Weimar) or elected by *Land* parliaments, is not likely to change the pattern.

omy that normally employs twelve million wage- and salary-earners. Meanwhile, additional dismantlings of industrial plants were announced immediately after the passage of the Bonn constitution, and essential industries (synthetic gasoline, butadiene, synthetic rubber), which would help cut imports and the necessity for exports, have been prohibited by the occupying powers. But democracy never thrives on economic distress and hopelessness.

The social and political set-up of the West German state, in many respects a product of military occupation, does not offer a promising basis for a democratic development. What forces in Germany, then, may be expected to strengthen the democratic spirit and revive moral values in public life and human relations? Western Germany has again a strong labor movement that supports democratic institutions and fights for social security, decent living standards, low-cost housing, and good schools free from church domination. And outside of politics and labor, there are various groups and individuals—particularly among the younger generation—who shun demagoguery and political immorality and long for stable values, ethical codes, social ideals.

Neither of these two forces dominates the political scene; both have seen many early postwar hopes wither away under military rule, and important sources of popular sympathy disappear under the pressure of material want and political disillusionment; both are wary of the Western powers' future policies with respect to Germany. The labor movement has had its fill of military arrogance, dismantlings, production restrictions, Allied vetoes of social legislation, Allied intervention in favor of Nazi profiteers, Allied sponsorship of insatiable church demands. The young people who grew up under Nazism and lost faith in Nazi tenets because the Nazi's war destroyed their childhood and adolescence, have matured prematurely. They are reserved and sceptical, abhor cant, loathe hypocrisy, and reject traditional patterns, whether of Nazi-German or Western-democratic make, and for this very reason

resent being condescendingly "re-educated."

Both political-minded organized labor and non-political youth refuse—more than four years after the end of the war—to be bridled and tutored by occupation administrators and "world opinion," or censured for the guilt of those who, as a result of Western occupation policy, are still in power today ("the Nazis' accomplices" according to labor; "the generation of our parents" in the young people's parlance.) It is easy to label this nationalism, and to attack it. But it is not so much nationalism as a sound reaction to unpleasant reality; to denounce it as reprehensible, as is the habit of many makers of "world opinion," will only deepen the occupation-made gulf between the democratic forces in Germany and the Western democracies.

INSTEAD of making this gulf unbridgeable, everything must be done to close it. This requires a deeper insight into the cleavages between classes and generations in Germany, and the ability to understand the emotional reactions and emotional blind-spots of people who for years have been living under foreign military rule and whose future still depends on the decisions of others. The democratic forces in Germany cannot grow either in numbers or in moral fortitude unless they have grounds for hope for a better,

happier, less restricted future. The first step towards this is to make sure that the material help lent to Western Germany by democratic countries is not permitted to reinforce the private empires of Nazi-tainted big business but goes to the people and is put to use through democratic institutions, cooperatives, municipalities, democratically constituted social welfare agencies; that economic reconstruction plans be developed in close cooperation with German labor offices, social insurance agencies, labor unions, organizations of refugees and expellees; and that international support be given to democratic forces in Germany rather than to the non-democratic elements which now strive to monopolize the media of communication, the school system, and the presentation of public opinion.

Pro-democratic groups in Germany most certainly are not free of faults, and may suffer even from basic ones. But it is childish to expect them to be paragons of virtue and it is folly to ignore their existence and to fail to help them to the limit, just because a thoroughly and reliably democratic Germany did not come into existence under military rule.

To neglect them now can only have one result: to encourage and arm the enemies of all democratic society, both within Germany and outside her borders.